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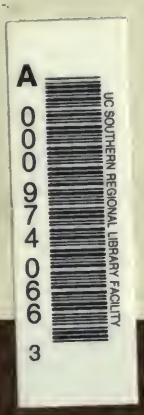
WHAT NEXT: OR, THE PEERS AND THE THIRD TIME OF ASKING



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WHAT NEXT?

OR

THE PEERS

AND THE

THIRD TIME OF ASKING.

"Where two are to ride on the same horse, one must needs ride behind."
Old Proverb.

THIRD EDITION.

LONDON:
JAMES RIDGWAY AND SONS, PICCADILLY.
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WHAT NEXT?

OR,

THE PEERS AND THE THIRD TIME OF ASKING.

The second session of Sir Robert Peel's Parliament has passed, and the third is approaching. How is it to be met by the Government? What measures are to be brought forward? Which will be carried? And *how?*

These are anxious questions, which it is impossible to answer without bearing in mind the past and present state of parties. The present state of parties may broadly be said to consist of those who seek to perfect the machinery, and to carry out the working of the Reform Bill, and of those who wish to obstruct or prevent both. The great fulcrum of the obstructives is in the House of Lords, where they command, and where they render each reform measure as little *mischievous* as is consistent with a certain show of conformity; and where every Government measure is treated in such a manner as to make it as difficult as possible for the Ministers of the Crown to conduct the affairs of the country. The old names of Whig and Tory are merging into Liberal and Conservative. The Con-

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servatives arrogantly assert,—and some few others have thoughtlessly admitted,—that the rank, wealth, and intelligence of the country are Conservative; but it may be as confidently asserted, and with infinitely more reason, that the direct converse is the truth. No doubt, a large majority of the modern peerages, of the minor gentry, of the Clergy of the Established Church, and of those families that have grown to wealth and station under the form of bishops, judges, governors, magistrates, contractors, pensioners, and sinecurists, during the extravagant wars and administrations of the last half century are Tory or Conservative. They are a stirring, worldly, experienced race, that act together with a compact zeal, which augments their strength, and exaggerates their numbers, while, with a *diffidence* peculiar to themselves, they arrogate an exclusive wisdom and sanctity which impose on the credulous. These are their claims to a monopoly of the rank, wealth, and intelligence of the country; but a very cursory analysis will expose the flimsiness of such pretensions. For even in the House of Lords, the majority of the really great historic and territorial Peers are liberal; so, also, are the great landed gentry.* Nearly the

* We cite at hazard the three premier Dukes of the three kingdoms—Norfolk, Hamilton, and Leinster; and if we take the senior peer of each of the ranks of the peerage, we shall find that of the thirteen who have seats in the Lords, no less than nine support the liberal government; and to these may be added, all the Howards, Russells, Cavendishes, and Ponsonbys; the

entire manufacturing interest (full one-fifth of the property of the whole country) is liberal, as well as nearly the whole of the Dissenting persuasions, comprising a fair one-half of our populations. The learned professions (save and except the theologians of Oxford and Cambridge) and the mercantile class are, at least, equally divided, while the vast body of the great trading community, which embodies the substantial middle ranks of life, the sinews of the State, are confessedly liberal. Now, there are few reflecting Tories who in their own closets can deny that this is the array, stretching from the Duke of Norfolk to the smallest municipal corporation, in which the larger masses of the essential rank, wealth, and intelligence of the country really reside. Indeed, the plain fact stares them in the face, that this is the power, or party which now governs the State. Gross miscalculations of its strength often arise, in consequence of those principles of toleration and independence which it professes, and which necessarily often render it discordant in views, and disunited in action, until urgent occasions call forth its energies, and rally and re-unite its scattered elements; and then, when too late, the Tories are amazed at the latent strength

Earls of Shrewsbury, Derby, Spencer, Scarborough, Fitzwilliam; the Marquesses of Lansdown, Westminster, and Breadalbane; the Dukes' of Cleveland and Sutherland; Mr Coke, of Norfolk, Mr. Chandos Leigh, Sir Richard Sutton, Sir John Ramsden, with other such like paupers, and men of no repute, raggamuffin reformers, without rank, wealth, or intelligence!!

they have provoked. This was eminently exemplified by the Reform Bill; it was felt when the Catholics were emancipated, and the Test Act repealed, in defiance of the so-styled powerful Conservatives; and it was more than tacitly recognised by the Tory ministry, when they affected to take office on conforming principles. But this liberal strength is subdivided into Whigs and Radicals, and it is the occasional disunion, real or expected, of these two sections, that gives an artificial importance to the Tory minority. The battle of the Reform Bill united, as its victory separated them, and in 1834, when this separation was widest, the Tories rushed in, and seized on the government. They dissolved the Reform Parliament, and, by dint of the greatest exertions of purse, promise, influence, and intimidation, succeeded in reducing, in their own Parliament, the old Whig and Tory numbers nearly to a balance. The turning of the scale rested with the Radicals, who naturally gave it to their companions the Whigs; and the two sections of Whig and Radical, profiting by experience, became thenceforth more closely united.* Parliament met, the Tories were overthrown, and a mixed government was formed, whose rule of action appears to be to bring forward

* An angry and silly indignation has been affected by the Tories at this union, which is in the natural course of things; for it is difficult to say where Whig ends and Radical begins; but Tory is as distinct from them both as Gatton from Leeds.

measures, according to their supposed fitness, and the exigency of the times, without reference to mere popularity on the one hand, or deference to the known Tory character of the Lords on the other,—to discuss and justify them in the face of the country; and finally, to accept and pass such as are not changed in spirit. In other words, to work out and establish the Reform Bill according to the wants of the country and the support they receive.

This, then, is the present ministry, and this the aspect of parties. Affairs went on tolerably well for the first session. Bills were sent up to the Lords for the settlement of the Irish tithes, and for the reform of the corrupt English municipal corporations. The Lords changed the spirit of the Irish, and only mutilated the English bill; wherefore the Ministers, in accordance with the rule just stated, dropt the one bill, and passed the other. There was much regret at the wanton rejection of the Irish Tithe bill by the Lords, and loud remonstrances and menaces were applied to the Ministers, for submiting to the mutilations of the Corporation Bill. But all this is now forgotten in the successful working of the *so mutilated* English Corporation bill: for, instead of the bold affirmation, that both sections (Whigs and Radicals) were satisfied in 1835, it would be nearer the truth to say, they are *now* satisfied with what was *then* done.

Both parties were also satisfied with the programme, or promise of last year's proceedings; but

at the close of the session, a cry was raised that nothing had been done. "Your promises were, "as you then were, mighty; but your performances, "as you now are, nothing," exclaimed Lord Lyndhurst to the Ministers, exulting in his destructive Conservatism, at the close of the Session. 'Tis no sin that a man should labour in his vocation, and the boast and the sarcasm were natural in his Lordship. His object, too, was plain enough—out of disappointment to breed dissension. And he succeeded, for a few hasty Liberals did take up the cuckoo note on this Tory key; but it is surprising that so shrewd an organ of many sober and stout Reformers as the Spectator, should have allowed itself to be so easily caught as thus to repeat:—"During a whole session, the Whig performance of "promises to the Radicals has been—nothing. All "turns upon that word. The new policy of the To-"ries has consisted in reducing to nothing, the con-"sideration for which the Radicals consented to sup-"port a Ministry opposed to all organic change." Reasoning from this assumed fact, it goes on to declare, that "the Whig ministry had no longer the "slightest claim to liberal support; and so far," it adds, "Lord Lyndhurst's plan was eminently "successful." We will reply to this by and bye; but, in the mean while, what is meant by this nothing?

Were the following acts which were passed during last Session nothing? Let us run over a few of them.

TITHE COMMUTATION ACT.

The re-settlement of English tithes, which for years had perplexed and embarrassed successive Ministers, Committees, and Parliaments, was finally and satisfactorily accomplished. It is true Lord Wharncliffe has had the modesty at Wakefield to claim this measure as the legitimate child of Sir Robert Peel; but the slightest comparison of Lord John Russell's and Sir Robert Peel's Tithe Bills, will shew that they resemble only in a common subject. The source of Lord John's bill derives from the original bill introduced by Lord Spencer; but Sir Robert Peel's measure, even in its amended form, was only permissive. It merely *allowed* the tithe owner and tithe payer to make agreements, and thus shrinking from all the difficulties of commutation, sacrificed nearly all its advantages. Now what is the resemblance between this half measure and Lord John Russell's act; under which, in *five years time, not an acre of English land will be subject to tithe.* But this is one of the many specimens which may be adduced of Tory tactics which seek to oppose or undermine all reforms when in progress, and then relying on the country's forgetfulness, to claim credit for their operation when they succeed.

MARRIAGE ACT.

An act was passed for the due celebration of marriage. Before Lord Hardwicke's act in 1753,

marriage in England was (as it has continued in religious Scotland), a civil contract, in so far as the state was concerned, and *all* were permitted to participate in its benefits. But Lord Hardwicke's bill in effect, enacted that none but Jews, Quakers, and members of the Church of England should marry. For by that act, no marriage was valid which was not solemnized by a clergyman of the Church of England, according to the forms prescribed by that act—Jews and Quakers excepted. But the Marriage Act of last Session reformed this compulsory conformity to the Church of England, and provides that any persons may be married in their own chapels, (if first duly registered for the purpose), by their own ministers, according to the form which they recognize, care being taken to introduce *contracting* words into the ceremony, and to provide a witness of it. The civil rights of succession are thus carefully guarded, and the clergy of the Church of England are relieved from the painful duty of enforcing their marriage service on those who dissent from it, while all are encouraged to fulfil their religious duties concerning matrimony according to their own persuasions and their own consciences. That is to say, the same toleration which has hitherto, in spite of bigots, left all Dissenters at liberty to offer up their prayers, and to receive their sacraments in their own chapels without first qualifying by a compulsory attendance on the service of the Church of England,

is consistently extended to the religious ceremonies of marriage.

And yet this act thus leaving marriage open to the due operation of law and religion, has been deliberately misrepresented and denounced from the altar, "as a measure which a few years ago hardly "a sane person would have had the hardihood to "propose,* as a degrading and corrupting law, a "desecration of the holy ordinance of matrimony," and "an outrage on an institution which has "always hitherto been designated as sacred."† These Balaam curses were delivered to his Clergy, and have since been printed by a Bishop of Exeter, who from what experience we know not, seems to think mankind, and more especially the people of England, have not sufficient religion within their own breasts to invoke its influences on their marriages, unless compelled thereto by Act of Parliament. Here is another specimen of Tory misrepresentation, and of the bigotry, real or assumed, beneath which it seeks to wound.

REGISTRATION ACT.

In connection with the last measure, an act was passed for the registration of all births, marriages, and deaths. Before this act no register of births was kept, but a register of baptisms only, by a minister of the Established Church, in fact a register of the performance of certain ceremonies

* Bishop of Exeter's charge, p. 14. † Ibid. p. 16.

of the Church of England. Births, deaths, and marriages, as such, were disregarded. A neglect confined, as respects Europe, to Spain, Portugal, Turkey,—and the British Islands. For all those who strongly objected to the Church of England form of baptism, and the Baptists who admit no infant baptism at all, were deprived of the advantages of this baptismal registration; and all that is known of deaths has been confined to persons buried in the Church of England cemeteries, being about one-half of the amount of deaths, all beyond was mere guess. But the act of last session has remedied this offence and defect.

ORANGE ASSOCIATION.

The Orange Association, was put down—and this alone were worth a session's labours. Let us simply recal what this was. Under forty years of Tory patronage it had grown to be an organized confederacy, by which between 3 and 400,000 men in Ireland, in England, in our colonies, and in the army, under badges of party and religious distinctions, convened secret or public meetings, to the encouragement of riotous assemblages and demonstrations of force, to the amount, in a recent instance, of 75,000 men, contrary to, and in defiance of, the law.

IRISH CONSTABULARY FORCE.

A bill for the reformation of the Irish constabulary force, though mutilated by the jealousy

of the Lords, was still kept sufficiently effective to be allowed to pass.

PRISONERS' COUNSEL ACT.

A bill, too, was passed, which humanely gave to the bewildered and ignorant prisoner, in criminal cases, the assistance of counsel.

STAMPS ON NEWSPAPERS.

Taxes yielding more than £700,000 were taken off, including the reduction of nearly three-fourths of the stamp duty on newspapers, whereby free discussion was encouraged and promoted throughout the country. As a proof of the immediate beneficial effects of this reduction, so opposed by the Tories and their press, we may state, that last year, when the high duties were in force, there were thousands of unstamped publications circulating in defiance of the stamp acts, and for the breach of which endless prosecutions were then pending. Now there are neither unstamped publications nor prosecutions; and although the first loss to the revenue amounts to some £300,000, yet there is every reason to expect the greater part of this sum will be replaced by the lower rate of duties on the increasing number of stamps and advertisements, as well as on the increasing consumption of paper.

CHURCH REFORM.

A more convenient and equable division of the dioceses and revenues of the several English

bishoprics was also effected, and the wedge of practical reform thus introduced into the body of the Church.

These measures are eight solid answers to the mere nothings of the Spectator. They are of sufficient importance and utility (and the list might be increased) to awaken regret on the part of Lord Lyndhurst, and real satisfaction amongst all *true* Reformers.

On the other hand, the Lords, with the speed of railroad legislation, kicked out all the bills for the reform of the Law and of the Court of Chancery,—they left the unfortunate prisoners for debt to rot in prison, and their creditors to go without satisfaction for another year,—they scouted in a few hours the fifty years' labours of three generations of reformers of the Post Office,—they scoffed also at the petitions of the Jews,—defended the corrupt burgesses of Stafford, and told the independent Scotch they should neither have cheap justice in their Court of Session, nor equal poor rates in their capital.

But these, and several other autocratic rejections by the Lords, though sufficiently mischievous, might be pleaded as special exceptions to the general rule of reform, rather than as an absolute denial of the rule itself. But with regard to Ireland their conduct was totally different. They denounced the very principles on which the reforms devised for it rested; and accordingly extirpated them, root

and branch, from the Irish Municipal Corporation and Irish Tithe bills. The Ministers, of course, accepted this treatment as tantamount to peremptory rejection, and the Lords must have so intended it, for a majority in the Commons, varying from 61 to 86, had firmly and repeatedly declared the organization of a system of corporate government to be the vital principle of the Irish Municipal Corporation Reform Bill, as it had been of the English and Scotch. Indeed, it is a mere mockery of terms to suppose, that a bill for the regulation of corporate government, means the abolition of all corporations. As well might the Parliamentary Reform Bill have been treated as a measure for the abolition of the House of Commons. And the importance of the special clauses of the Irish Tithe Bill were *painfully* well known to many of the Tory ex-officials.

Thus, therefore, matters now stand, — some reforms have been squeezed, and others may be expected, with increased difficulty, to be squeezed through the Lords respecting England ; but for Ireland, in whatever regards the civil co-equality of religious sects, they are inexorable. This civil co-equality flows, indeed, directly from the Catholic Emancipation Bill, so long and vigorously resisted by their Lordships, and so suddenly and vigorously thrust down their throats by the Duke of Wellington. But he and they are now deaf to the *reasons* which convinced them then. They seem to think, that the

inequality in the numbers of the two sects should be compensated by an inverse inequality in the laws which govern them. At all events they are inexorable, and their majority insurmountable. On the other hand the King's government, and the House of Commons, even of the late Ministers, stand pledged in honour and by repeated votes, to assert this civil co-equality as the key-stone of our union with Ireland.

Now what is to be done? Affairs cannot go on much longer in Ireland, in their present state. Writs of rebellion—Rathcormac—an unpaid, or eleemosynary clergy—millions of tithes, (that slippery property) under a Penelopean legislation—convicted and condemned corporators, still filling corporations and administering justice—an organized association, the natural child of discontent, peaceably and gradually assuming the control of the country—all these, with other attendant circumstances and *contingent accidents*, cry aloud for decision. What, then, is to be done? Which party is to yield? Is there no door open for compromise? Apparently none. Yet one or the other party must ultimately give way. Which ought—which must? As in most cases—the weakest. But which is the weakest? That which has the nation against it. And how is this ascertained? By a dissolution of Parliament. But this appeal to the nation has already been made, and *by the advice and under the influence of a Government favourable to the opinions of the*

Lords: yet the result was hostile to those opinions, and so decidedly so that the Government gave up the contest, declaring in Sir Robert Peel's words, that the power of the Lords must not be strained too far.

Yet still the Tory Lords hold out. They contend that their opinions are gaining ground, and a reaction taking place, because there is a smaller majority in the present than in the late Parliament. Are they right, or are they wrong? This question leads straight to a second dissolution. But is it necessary and constitutional that a series of dissolutions should take place, for the satisfaction of the prolonged doubts of the Lords? And would another dissolution solve those doubts? In fact, would their Lordships bow to the decision of a majority of that paulò post futurum Parliament? Would they not again, as now, cavil at its greater or less amount; analyze and pick holes in its election, construction, and the relative number of English, Irish, and Scotch members—of its Whig and something more, and Radical and (perhaps then) Radical and something more composition? Should we not hear of excitement, delusion, intimidation, government influence? In short, what guarantee have we that the Tory Lords would acknowledge the voice of the nation in the votes of its representatives? They will not do so now—why should they then?

But it is said, they would listen to reason, then, for there would be a greater majority against them.

But what deference have they ever shewn to great and overpowering majorities? The House of Commons, which passed the Reform Act, carried its first bill by a majority of 113. What did the Lords do? They threw it out. The next session, another bill, less energetic in its provisions, but backed by another majority of 116 went to the Lords. How were this second majority and the accompanying spirit of concession met? Ask the events of May, 1832. Lord Lyndhurst, then, as now, the great champion of the unyielding infallibility of the Lords, commenced mutilating the bill, taking it (precisely as he did the bills of last session) out of the hands of the Government. But Lord Grey and Lord Brougham arrested the learned judge in his factious career. They went to Windsor. What did they there? What did Lord Grey, the supposed great champion of the Peerage, but the known and approved great assertor of the people's rights and of public tranquillity? He feared not the Lords, for he asked for authority to create no less than fifty peers, in one day. His Majesty hesitated, the Reform Ministry resigned, where was the Reform Bill then? The Duke of Wellington was in: was he to carry it? No, indeed. How, then, was it carried? By the people. The Peers balanced their irresponsible powers against the weight of the people, and they went to the beam, as chaff. There is no use in denying a plain matter of fact. It was the stern aspect of the country,

from one end to the other; and the accounts of the myriad assemblages of Manchester, Birmingham, Glasgow, and other large towns, which kept hourly pouring in, that daunted the Tory courage of the Peers, and rendered it impossible for the Duke of Wellington to form a ministry. He went to the King, and told him so: he came down to the Lords, and acknowledged it. And then the Tory Peers, being urged by certain letters demissory slunk from their benches, and so the bill passed. Is this process to be repeated? Is it so constitutional? Will the House of Lords, as now constituted, work only by convulsions?

This digression affords a sample of the practical spirit of concession and constitutional respect on the part of the Lords for large, unquestionable and successive majorities in the Commons. Majorities too, such as it is neither probable nor desirable that the Liberals should again muster. Is it therefore probable that a bare second dissolution would win over, convince, or coerce the Lords now, when they are infinitely more enterprizing than at the time of the Reform Bill? Both reason and experience answer—No.

But what will constrain them? That which constrained them before—the force of opinion, and the fear of a reform in their own House.

Now the force of opinion is difficult to measure, it is a loose term, and a variable quantity. A government conciliates it by a prosperous state of affairs, by a reduction of taxation, and reform of

abuses, by the unanimity of its members, and by carrying, or by sincere and manly endeavours to carry, beneficial and popular measures, and finally it is excited and rendered active by opposition.

In 1832 it was strongly in favour of the Liberals, but the overweening majorities and consequent dissensions and contradictory measures of the first Reform Parliament rapidly dispersed it. It ebbed towards the Conservatives—towards the Radicals—it was every where—no where. But the sudden breaking up of the Reform administration, the glaring inconsistencies of the Tory conforming Ministry, the frank bearing of the present Government, the independent union of all Reformers, and the obstructive diligence of the Lords, have successively re-collected and turned the tide, and it is now flowing steadily in favour of Lord Melbourne and the Liberals. This assertion is best measured by facts. If we refer to the registrations for the last years, we shall find:—

Registration in		1834.		1836.	
England & Wales,	County, 393,895 Borough, 288,721	676,616		County, 438,412 Borough, 300,234	738,746
Ireland,	County, 62,439 Borough, 32,648	95,087		County, — Borough, —	100,000 *
Scotland,	County, 41,323 Borough, 30,971	72,294		County, 46,224 Borough, 31,148	77,372
		843,997			916,118

The numbers cannot yet be exactly ascertained for this year; but from those obtained, there is reason to believe they will exceed a million. This is most

* This is taken low, and in round numbers, for all the returns are not complete.

satisfactory, for all Liberals must rejoice to see the constituencies annually encreasing in sound members, while those pets of the Tories, the freemen, and potwallopers, gradually disappear. In Bristol, for instance, which returned Sir Richard Vivyan on the freemen's interest, there were registered in 1834, 5388 freemen, and 4689 householders; but now there are on the register 6085 householders, and only 4337 freemen; being a difference of 2447 in favour of substantial voters. But, without descending to particulars, or to any analysis, which, however curious, must be necessarily full of errors, we rest our faith on the broad fact, that a government and party leaning to the popular side of politics, will and must always profit by an encrease of popular constituents. The Tories got the start in watching the registrations, and placed numbers of their adherents on the lists in 1833; and to this early rallying of their forces before the revising barristers, coupled with the temporary possession of government, they owe their strength in the present Parliament. This casual success has naturally deceived many; but now that the Reformers have had time to pay a similar attention to their registrations, even those who formerly shouted reaction recoil from a trial of strength. In England and Wales, where the greatest reform losses were sustained, the Liberals would recover from thirty to forty members: in Scotland, where the liberal members already are as two to one, there would be a further encrease of four or five members;

and in Ireland, (thanks to Lord Lyndhurst's *alien* speeches, and the noble army of tithe proctors,) there would be a gain of from fifteen to twenty members. The late Longford election illustrates this assertion. For, in 1835, the Tory candidate was at the head of the poll, beating Mr. Luke White by 801 to 428; but now the tide is turned, and Mr. White has beaten the Tory by a majority of 93. A favourable election might thus remove from fifty to seventy members from the Tory to the liberal side of the House, and so raise the liberal majorities to above one hundred and fifty.

If further confirmation of these opinions be required, it may be found in the state of the elective corporations. We do not cite the Scotch municipal corporations, for there is only one district of Scotch boroughs that returns a Tory member; and the Irish corporations are, in obedience to the will of the House of Lords, left alone in the glory of their admitted corruption; but in England the political state of the corporations is easily ascertained, and is as follows :—

	1835.		1836.
Corporations whose Members are all Liberals	30	—	30
Corporations where the majority are Liberals .	71	—	71
Corporations where they are all Tories . .	5	—	5
Corporations where the majority are Tories .	25	—	26
Corporations neutral	2	—	2
Corporations doubtful	3	—	2
Total . . .	136		136

		1835.		1836.
These 136 Corporations were composed of	Liberals,	2,487	—	2,500
	Tories,	1,033	—	1,035

Here are no signs of re-action. It might have been expected that there would have been a strong but transitory run in favour of the Liberals in 1835, when the elections were first opened; but the above returns shew that this liberal disposition has been fully sustained in 1836. In fact, the Tories themselves confess the weight of numbers to be against them, for they declare that our corporations "are filled from the meanest and most corrupt of the people." This in Tory euphuism, best taught by the Bishop of Exeter, means—opponents.

These strong and cheering testimonies of the state of public feeling render double credit to the ministers who resist the temptation they expose for a dissolution, and offer an honourable contrast to the Tories, who, in 1834, threw the whole country into the angry agitation of contested elections, for the selfish purpose of snatching at office. No doubt, a greater number of liberal members would be convenient for lazy attenders and for careless ministers, but there are enough now to do their country's work, and it looks well when ministers have the manliness to rely on the goodness of their measures, rather than on the number of their supporters. By those measures they must ultimately stand or fall; and if they continue as they have begun, steadily to bombard the House of Lords with good measures, they will, ere long, force them to

surrender. For each reform once passed lengthens and strengthens the lever by which consequent reforms may be wrenched out, while every rejection of a good measure stimulates the force of public opinion. The country, too, though proverbially slow to act, is not, and has not been unobservant of the struggle which is going on, and in due time and if need be, it may speak out and act as it did on Parliamentary Reform. We all remember how many sapient Tories assured themselves the country then was indifferent, or re-acting. But they deceived themselves, as they may do again; and perhaps ere very long some little bill inadvertently thrown out when the vessel is full may be the last drop—the East Retford of the Lords.

Few wish to see matters suddenly brought to this pass, and therefore they desire that the Lords should for their own sakes have the grace to yield in time; and to join frankly in the wholesome progress of national reform. Indeed there are signs, if not hopes, of this consummation, for one of their approved organs has made the discovery, invisible to Tory eyes in Tory days, "That there are innumerable topics for measures "to remedy existing and practical evils, and "alleviate the sufferings of the poor," and therefore recommends their Lordships to prepare and bring "into their own House, and mature by full "and anxious debate during the whole session, a "great variety of bills, having a practically bene-"ficial character." The pleasure of seeing the

Peers turn reformers may make us forget for a while the slight incongruity of their thus taking the cares of legislation out of the hands of Government. But not content with these lessons, the same reforming teacher now tells them, "that all great and "durable changes in a free country must begin "with the middle classes." Whereupon we find their Lordships dining and speechifying, with a most edifying industry, frequenting public meetings, coquetting with trades' unions, and courting the £10. householders and smaller tradesmen whom they so bitterly contemned during the debates on the qualification clauses in the Parliamentary and Municipal Corporation Reform Bills. What does all this mean? Has some democrat in disguise counselled them to play upon the credulity, and bid for the confidence of the reforming masses with the *conservative* intention of turning it against them?

Be this as it may, few will deny that their power and their seats, some of which are even now elective, some hereditary, and others for life, have been confided to their judgment only for the benefit of the nation; and as they have already often been modified for that benefit, real or imaginary, so they may be again. The two last important changes in their House, introduced the one, twenty-eight Irish elective Peers for life (besides four bishops), of whom twenty-five are Tories,—and the other, sixteen Scotch elec-

tive Peers, of whom the whole sixteen are Tory !* We have said real or imaginary benefit, for right or wrong the Lords have neither real nor constitutional power to *continue* to resist that which the country *continues* to require. They have lately attempted to deny this plain first principle of our limited monarchy. The independence of the Lords, carried to the height of their conservative notions, would produce anarchy, or constitute an oligarchy, or old Venetian tyranny, but in no degree the mixed government of England which has hitherto boasted of a balance of powers. If the Lords lay claim to independence, so also may the Crown in the exercise of its veto, and the Commons in their control of the public purse. But the retaliatory exercise of these rival pretensions would at once stop the whole machine of government, and produce anarchy. Wisely, therefore, the responsibility of Mi-

* The experience of 130 and of 36 years has shewn that the constituencies of these 44 Peers are eminently defective in one great advantage of elective bodies in the returning representatives of all shades of opinions. This experience should point the finger-post to their reform. The contrast also between the opinions of the Peers and of the people of Ireland and Scotland is remarkable, and another election will make it more so.

			Tories.	Liberals.
Ireland,	Peers,	28	25	3
	Commons,	105	42	63
Scotland,	Peers,	16	16	0
	Commons,	53	17	36

SIXTY-THREE to THREE, and THIRTY-SIX to NONE ! What proportions ! what harmony !

nisters, and the privilege of dissolution, check this licence in two estates of the realm, and a sound discretion has hitherto preserved the Lords from the application of some practical curb to their technical independence. But now the conservative Peers seem resolved to invoke this tangible restraint, for they may rest assured the nation has no intention of allowing the Crown and the Commons to become mere cyphers in the hands of a compact and permanent majority of the Lords. For many years there was an approach to this state of things, for the real authority of the State had been merging in the Lords, who ruled the country by their nominees in the Commons, and, by the same power, constrained the Crown in the choice of its ministers. The Reform Act abated this encroachment, and re-adjusted the balance of the constitution. The Lords see this fact, but cannot reconcile themselves to its operation, and are, therefore, still contending secretly, and in some instances, perhaps, unconsciously, for the nomination of the ministers, and for a working influence in the Commons. This is at the bottom of their opposition to many of the measures, and more especially to the men of the present administration, who are, from circumstances, essentially the men of the Commons. The Lords, then, are struggling for their lost ascendancy. They pertinaciously tried their strength, even against the Reform Bill itself; and, although severely checked, they are in no degree reclaimed,

but only made cautious; for choosing a more covert battle-field, and appealing to the prejudices of their countrymen, they now look for success under the mask of a No-Popery Church-in-danger cry. This is the key to their resistance on the Irish questions, beneath which they are in reality fighting for their own proud and profitable, but departed interests; but the people of England are not blind to this artifice, and in the mean while the Irish are weary of being treated as subjects for the Lords' experiments in re-action.

Unless we are much deceived, the King and the People, that is the King's Government and the People's representatives, will, ere long, declare that Ireland must not, and shall not remain as it is. That the holdings of its Church shall no longer be daily loosened, and its Protestant Clergy hallooed on to an unseemly contest for temporalities, *till there be none left to contend for;* while the whole country is kept quivering on the verge of separation or revolt. If this be so, then it will be for the Lords to decide whether their House shall remain as it is, or be reformed. For they must either acquiesce in reconciling Ireland, or upset the Ministers and take the Government themselves. But they cannot undertake the Government without the Commons, *and the Commons they cannot get.* Therefore they must acquiesce or be reformed. Now there is small hope that they will acquiesce with a good grace; and it has been shewn that a

bare dissolution would fail to convince them, therefore their Reform real or *imminent* is the only remaining expedient.

This reform might be effected by subjecting their irresponsibility to an elective process; but the machinery is difficult to invent, and *how* is the measure to be passed, and *when?*

Their obstructiveness might be reduced by placing a veto on their third rejection of any measure passed by a given majority of two distinct parliaments. But the question recurs of how and when will such a reform pass their Lordships' House?

Their political discordance with the country might be harmonized by the creation of such a number of hereditary Peers, as would neutralize the present Tory majority, and this might be effected without their Lordships' consent. But where, without exhausting the House of Commons, and extinguishing the landed gentry of the country, are some 100 gentlemen to be found with sufficient estates to support the hereditary rank of a Peer?—How long would it be before these 100 new Peers, hereditary and irresponsible, forgot their principles in favour of a love and defence of their order? and what signs are there that public opinion would countenance such an addition to the already ponderous hereditary wisdom of the country?

The last alternative is the creation of Peers for life, or a joint creation of hereditary and life Peers. There are many men whose health, fortune, or

habits, forbid their mounting the hustings of a popular election, or taking part in the long and stormy debates of a popular assembly, yet whose talents and experience might be of great service to their country. We refer to the retired Governors, or Administrators of our various and far-spread Colonies and dependencies, to our great Generals and Admirals, retired Diplomatists, official men, great merchants, persons of high legal or scientific attainments, and others of general repute.—We well know that the greater number of these persons having been selected and employed by Tory governments, are of Tory persuasion. Yet still we could point out several who are not, and there is a vast floating fund of intelligence and integrity in the country, from whence Life Peers might be selected. The above classes were named, more for the sake of designating the future stock, from whence the life peerage might be replenished, and it would be difficult to say, that the House of Lords would not gain in real honour, character, stability, influence, and utility, by large and successive infusions from them. The House of Lords, to use a German phrase, is now too one-sided; its interests and its experience are nearly exclusively territorial, for even its legal, military, and episcopal adjuncts, all equally rise from or merge in land—loaves and fishes, corn and tithes.

It may be added, that this method of acting on the House of Lords, is perfectly independent of their Lordships' consent;— is in accordance with the

growing public opinion, which revolts from a House of Lords entirely beyond control or responsibility; and that it would leave the old Peers still untouched in their hereditary seats and undoubted honours. It might be necessary to limit the number of life Peers, and to protect them from the temptation of accepting hereditary Peerages. And the corrective of a qualification for the hereditary Peers, by initiation in the Commons, or by amount of property, and which they themselves are so urgent in affixing to all other franchises, might not unusefully be applied to their own.

The power of summoning Peers to Parliament for life, or even for a session, is one of the oldest prerogatives of the Crown, and life Peerages are as recent as the reign of George the Second. If we go farther back, we shall find that all the old Peers of England, the Barons of Magna Charta, were hereditary, not in their persons, but by their fiefs and estates. The hides of land, not the parchment patent, then constituted the Peer.

These suggestions are thrown out to shew that a Reform of the Lords is neither without precedents nor so very impracticable, and the change once over, men might congratulate one another upon the ease with which it had been accomplished, and the benefits which it promised: yet, still we frankly own, it would be an experiment, and prefer, therefore, that the Lords should have the good sense and good feeling to allow matters to pass quietly off, and not force on a resort to it, as a choice of evils.

Thus much for the Lords :—we now take a survey of the present state of the country, and will cast back a few glances to its comparative *prosperity* under the Tories.

The Liberal party have now been in power for these last six years, with the exception of the four months Tory intrusion in 1834. During that time they have taken off ABOVE EIGHT MILLIONS of taxes, they have thrown open the trade of China and of India, and extended other channels for commerce; they have also relaxed the old restrictive system which, under a mistaken notion of protection, cramped or misdirected our industry. As a comment on this policy, the country for the last six years has enjoyed a course of unexampled prosperity. Every branch, and all the details of trade, manufacture, and commerce have put forth strong and fruit-bearing shoots. And we earnestly refer those who doubt these assertions, to the Tables of Trade and Commerce which are now annually prepared by the Board of Trade, and by which it will appear as clear as that two and two make four, how little progressive in improvement the country was, in any one branch, during *the good old Conservative* times, and how steadily, yet rapidly, it has advanced in every one branch since it has fallen under the *mismanagement* of the *ignorant* and *destructive* Liberals. We may state generally that our imports and our exports which averaged under the Tories thirty-four and fifty-five millions respectively, and which increased but little

from the peace in 1814 till the relaxation of their so-called *protecting* system under Mr. Huskisson, have since that change gradually risen, till they reached in 1835 the enormous amount of forty-eight and ninety-one millions.

This is an undeniable proof of the general and progressive improvement of the wealth and prosperity of the country. But for the satisfaction of the more curious of those who may not have access to the Statistic Tables or to the official returns to the Houses of Parliament, we will cite some few of the many striking instances of the happy results of the reduction of the swaddling taxation of the Tories, and of the liberal commercial policy pursued by the Whig Governments of 1830 and 1834. The declared value of

BRITISH PRODUCE AND MANUFACTURES EXPORTED.

In 1829,	or the last year of the Tories		£36,150,379
1835,	Whig period	-	41,350,000
1836	Ditto -	-	46,926,370

Being an increase of 33 per cent. in six years. And if we descend to particulars, we shall find the results equally striking; for instance, in the exports.

LINEN MANUFACTURES.

1829,	or Tory period	-	£1,885,831
1834	Whig do.	-	2,579,000
1835	Ditto	-	3,226,000

WOOLLEN.

1829	Tory period	-	£4,556,809
1834	Whig do.	-	5,975,000
1835	Ditto	-	7,145,826

COTTON.

1829	Tory period	-	£17,140,114
1834	Whig do.	-	20,513,586
1835	Ditto	-	22,128,384

IRON AND STEEL, average exported.

5 Tory years, from 1825 to 1829, 87,237 tons.
5 Whig years, from 1830 to 1834, 142,071

The imports tell even a still more striking tale; for instance, take the Glove Trade, in which complaints have been made of the mischievous effects of admitting foreign competition, yet the importation of the raw material for the supply of the home manufacture has not the less increased.

DRESSED AND UNDRESSED KID SKINS IMPORTED.

1829	Tory period	-	698,604 skins.
1834	Whig do.	-	798,000
1835	Ditto	-	1,044,000

The same observations and results apply to our Silk manufactures, and more especially those of Spitalfields, which languished under the Tory *protections*, from which they were no sooner delivered than they took a spring, and are actually increasing in their exports, notwithstanding the great home consumption, shewn by the following table.

SILK (raw, waste and thrown), imported.

1829	Tory period	-	2,892,201 lbs.
1834	Whig do.	-	4,450,000
1835	Ditto	-	5,787,000

SILK (manufactured) exported.

1829	Tory period	-	£255,871
1834	Whig do.	-	636,419
1835	Ditto	-	973,786

Or, if we look to the consumption of articles necessary to the comfort and well-being of the poorer classes, and upon which, therefore, the Liberals have reduced the oppressive Tory duties, we shall find the same cheering results. Take SEA-BORNE COALS, on which the unjust and mischievous duty was repealed in 1830, and of which the following amount has entered London and the other ports of the kingdom.

1829	Tory period	4,270,557 tons.
1834	Whig do.	7,901,346
1835	Do.	8,416,805

Or COCOA, the duty on which was reduced from 6*d.* to 2*d.* in 1832, and of which the following is the home consumption.

1829	Tory period	393,847 lbs.
1834	Whig do.	1,073,795
1835	Do.	1,084,170

Or TEA, the monopoly of which was abated in 1833.

1829	Tory period	29,495,190 lbs.
1834	Whig do.	34,969,651
1835	Do.	36,574,004

Or SOAP, the duty upon which was reduced one-half in 1833.

1829	Tory period	118,134,863 lbs.
1834	Whig do.	154,746,334
1835	Do.	160,909,316

Or Currants and Raisins, (duty reduced one-half in 1834).

1829	Tory period	235,813 cwt.
1834	Whig do.	310,980
1835	Do.	354,413

A still more striking instance is offered by Printed Cottons, on which the entire vexatious duty was repealed in 1831, and on which the extent of the increased home consumption cannot therefore be ascertained, but it may be measured by the exportation, which in

1829 or Tory period	. . .	130,075,858 yards.
1835 Whig ditto	. . .	279,811,176

Or if we take a wider range, it will appear that the average consumption of Cotton Wool for our manufactures—

10 years (Tory full ascendancy,) from 1816 to 1825	- - - 138,120,000 lbs.
10 years (their decline and fall,) from 1826 to 1835	- - : 255,975,000 lbs.

Being an increase of no less than 85 per cent.!

These are instances sufficient to satisfy the most sceptical, that the country is not quite ruined by the *ignorant mismanagement* of the *destructive Whigs*, or that they neglect the interest of the industrious. Indeed a further and most satisfactory proof of the augmented comforts and prudence of the labouring population may be found in the increasing number

and amount of their deposits in the Savings' Banks.

	Depositors.	Amount.	Average Deposit.
1829 Tory period	409,945	£14,434,921	£35 4 0
1834 Whig ditto	499,207	£15,369,844	£30 16 0
1835 Ditto	537,517	£16,456,104	£30 12 0

But if it still be objected that this prosperous aspect of affairs is unsound, and caused merely by an intemperate spirit of speculation, we may appeal to the steadily decreasing number of bankruptcies.

	INSOLVENTS.
1832	4648
1833	4583
1834	4275
1835	3890

Are we therefore mistaken in assuming that these plain matters of fact, authenticated by plain figures, are satisfactory answers to those rhetorical figures of complaint and vituperation in which disappointed Tories indulge? And we specially point out that these returns are on articles upon which *Whig legislation has acted*, and that they shew not only an excess over the Tory period, but a growing increase over the preceding and other years.

But the loyal Tories *exultingly* reply agriculture is depressed. Now it is quite true the profits of agriculture have not kept pace with this march, but they have been greater than during the Tory epoch; and if the farmers have found it difficult always to pay their rents, they should remember that these are agreements binding between themselves and their landlords, and with which no government can interfere. So long as they will not see the stability and

advantages which they would obtain by a more open trade in corn, they must make the best shift they can with their fluctuating home-markets. Meanwhile the Government has not been inattentive to their interests. For the largest portion of the relief from taxation has been taken from off their shoulders, and the poor-rates, which pressed heaviest on land, have, by the amended Poor-laws, been reduced to the extent of £3,800,000. And that the agricultural interest has not been in so depressed and profitless a state, as Lord Chandos and other rent agitators would make farmers believe, may be shown by an unanswerable appeal to the thousands of acres that have been enclosed since the Peace, and are yearly now being enclosed. It is notorious, too, that during the war we received a large portion of our supply of corn from abroad. Since then we have added three millions to our population, and yet for the last four years not a quarter of corn has been imported for home consumption. Can there be a stronger proof of the increased productiveness of our English agriculture, than that instead of partially feeding twelve millions of people, it now completely feeds fifteen millions?

Such then is the continued national prosperity that has hitherto attended the Liberal Government. Let any one look to the right or to the left, to the south or to the north, in towns or in fields, and he will every where see prosperity rearing its industrious head firmly and progressively around him. The march of wealth has indeed outstripped all

other marches, and latterly has taken to rail-road paces. But latterly there have been signs of a check, which seem now, happily, to be fading away. A bad harvest, particularly in the North, raised the prices of the necessaries of life, while a heavy pressure on the money market slackened the spirit of enterprize. This pressure arose, partly from the state of our foreign exchanges, which were depressed by a demand for capital to defray the vast rail-road, and other undertakings, (not producing an immediate return) which are carrying on throughout the Continent, and still more in America, our greatest customer. America is also establishing a metallic currency, and by a Mint regulation, which attempts to fix the relation of gold to silver at a rate differing from the commercial par, she has made gold instead of silver the currency of the Union, and thereby seriously affected the value of gold in England. The loans too for Portugal, Spain, Holland, Belgium, and other states, which, within the last five years, have been chiefly raised in this country, have drained off much capital. But the greater force of the pressure came from the *tardy* fears of the Bank of England, and of other great capitalists, who, after large issues, called in and restricted many of their money transactions, from a dread of the consequences of the rash and uninstructed issues of money of the Joint-stock Banks, in favour of the thousand bubble speculations which were springing up, till these Joint-stock

Banks, becoming alarmed, called in their credits as incautiously as they opened them. There was also a gradual and general rise of prices since Easter, which the bad harvest further enhanced, while a real, or caution-caused, want of money, by narrowing credit and speculation, checked trade, manufacture, and general industry.

These causes produced a prudential alarm in November, which shewed signs of degenerating into a prudential panic, but which, though it may have caused some local distress, will probably stave off the real misery of a real panic. This escape is partly due to the experience so dearly bought during the panic of 1825: but it is much more to be attributed to the really sound state of the vast majority of our present mercantile transactions, and which the tables to which we have been referring amply verify. And not a little credit should be given to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who, in his admirable speech on the Budget, in May, 1836, after clearly proving the remarkable prosperity of the country, most distinctly warned and entreated "the public not to be led away, by a knowledge of our prosperity, to embark recklessly in inconsiderate schemes and wild speculation."

But these observations regard only the financial part of the subject, and there is another consideration of higher importance,—the labouring and the pauper classes; who, by the rise of prices and the restrictions on speculation, are straitened both in their means and their sources of subsistence. This leads

to an anxious regard to the working of the amended Poor Laws, and the strain which a winter of distress may bring on their yet imperfect machinery.

The Poor Law Reform was introduced with the unanimous approbation of all the most eminent men of every shade of political opinion. It was supported in the Commons by Radicals, Tories, and Whigs; and when Cobbett, the great manager of the opposition, ventured on a division, Mr. Hume, Mr. Roebuck, and Sir R. Peel were seen by the sides of Lord Althorp and Lord John Russell. In the Lords, the Duke of Wellington, *then* the leader of his party, Lord Wharncliffe, Lord Winchilsea, and Lord Liverpool, fought in the same ranks with Lord Lansdowne and Lord Brougham. The Duke of Wellington, Lord Ellenborough, and Lord Salisbury themselves drew many of the clauses of the Bill, and sought to add materially to the powers of the Commissioners. During the two years and a half which have passed since the Bill became law, the landed gentry, whether Tories, Whigs, or Radicals, have been among the most zealous and the most effectual administrators of its provisions. They have been the chairmen and vice-presidents of its Boards of Guardians, and its defenders against the ignorance and dishonesty, or the prejudices of its assailants. Such has been the conduct of those to whom education, knowledge, and wealth give station and weight in the country. But at the same period, too many of the humbler retainers of faction, the

Tory daily and weekly press, almost without exception, together with some of the organs of extreme radicalism, the Times, the Herald, the Standard, the John Bull, the Weekly Dispatch, the Poor Man's Guardian, and the unstamped metropolitan journals have been, and continue to be, scurrilous and violent in opposition to the principles and measures which the heads of their own parties approve and assist. It is curious to see, that almost the only measure which the enlightened and eminent men of all parties agree to support, is the only measure which the prejudiced or malicious of all parties agree to vilify. With the advantage of such friends and such enemies, the measure could not but prosper; but we believe that both the one and the other are equally surprised at the degree and rapidity of its success.

Every one must recollect the sneers with which Lord Althorp was met when he stated that his measure for agricultural relief was to be found in the Poor Law Amendment Bill. Admitting, as every member of the House, except Cobbett's small piebald minority, admitted, the general excellence of the Bill, still it was said, it is no measure of immediate relief. Thousands, it was said, will be spent on the machinery of the Board, with its commissioners and assistant commissioners, and clerks and retained local officers. Thousands more on the erection of workhouses—and workhouse relief to whole families will, for a considerable time, be more expensive than the partial assistance which

can be afforded to the labourer in his own cottage: ---and what is the result?

We have the Commissioners to tell it.

"We have given in the Appendix two Tables, "containing the abstracts of the expenditure for the "parochial years 1835 and 1836. From these "Tables it will be seen that the decrease of 'money "'expended for the relief of the poor,' was, in the "year 1835, as compared with the year 1834, "£790,838; that in 1836, as compared with 1834, "the decrease of the expenditure under this head "was £1,599,625; that the reduction in the ex- "pense of suits of law in 1835, as compared with "1834, was £56,077; that the reduction on the "same head of expenditure in 1836, as compared "with 1834, was £86,173, or nearly double the "annual expenses of the Commission; that the "decrease on the expenditure, effected by the same "management for other miscellaneous purposes in "the year 1836, as compared with 1835, was "£112,149. We have no means of ascertaining "the state of this head of expenditure in 1834, to "compare it with 1835.

"If, upon the evidence of the frequent occur- "rence of parishes as favourably situated as others "in general circumstances, but where no reduc- "tion of the rates has taken place, and where they "have even increased during the two last years, "the principles of the new administration not "having been adopted in those parishes, it may be "assumed that, but for the general promulgation

" and adoption of those principles and the new " measures, the expenditure would have remained " stationary at the amount at which it was in the " year 1833; then, the total reduction or saving " effected upon the rates levied for the relief of the " poor by a change of management since that year " is £3,809,489. If the total amount of parochial " rates be considered for the last three years " (during the first of which the expenditure for the " county rates was not distinguished in the Re- " turns), then the gross saving is the sum of " £4,145,368, or in round numbers a gross sum of " £4,000,000, saved from an expenditure which " chiefly operated as a bounty on indolence and " improvidence; but which is now applicable, and " of much of it there is distinct evidence that it is " actually applied, *in the shape of wages*, to remu- " nerate productive industry."—*Poor Law Report for* 1836, *p.* 38.

If this has been the saving within two years, during which the act has been brought into active operation over only about one-third of England, and as to the greater part of that one-third for less than a year, and after meeting the expenses of building and outfit, what may not be expected to be the effects when the whole country has been subjected to the intelligent administration of Boards of Guardians, after all the expenditure attending the beginnings of a vast experiment has been defrayed, and the whole system works with ease and regularity? We firmly believe that two

years hence the poor rate, from the heaviest, will have become one of the lightest of the burthens upon land.

The statements of the Commissioners, however, have been objected to by some as *ex parte* evidence. As they rest on documents open to inspection, it is not easy to see how they can be erroneous; but for the sake of those Tories who will not believe even in figures, unless the addition and substraction are made by their own friends, we extract from the same volume the following letter of Lord Hardwicke respecting the Caxton Union, containing a population of 9000 persons, relieved, under the old system, at an annual expenditure of 6000*l.*

" *Wimpole, July* 29, 1836.

" I have looked at our expenditure, and have " taken two periods for comparison, viz. from the " 2d of September, 1835 (the day the Guardians " first met), to Christmas of the same year. This " period, compared with the same of the pre- " vious year, gives a reduction of expenditure of " £628. 8*s.* 6*d.*

" The second period I have taken is three " months ending at Lady-day 1836. This, com- " pared with the like period in 1835, gives a re- " duction of expenditure in the Union of £751. 10*s.* 8*d.* " This will give a reduction in the first year of " about £2,600.

" With regard to the condition of the labouring " classes, I should say that a visible alteration has

" taken place in their manners ; all farmers that I " have conversed with say, that they are more " respectful and civil in their behaviour, and more " regular to their time of work. The parishes in " the Union have never been so free from crime. " The cases brought before the magistrates at the " Petty Sessions are much reduced.

" In the parish of Gamlingay the saving has " been enormous, and the able-bodied were during " the winter employed generally, never having " above from 17 to 20 out of work at any time ; " whereas the previous winters, for years past, " have seen 100 men, on an average, receiving " parochial relief.

" Such is a very short statement of the condition " and effect of the union of 26 parishes in this part " of Cambridgeshire ; and I have no doubt, that " by a steady and just administration of the law, " taking each case on its own merits, we shall next " year be able to give you a report that will show " a great saving, together with a large improve- " ment in the moral state of the community.

" I have, &c.

" HARDWICKE."

" *A. Power, Esq. Poor Law Office.*"

We have dwelt on the reduction caused by the Poor Law Act in expenditure, because it is the portion of its results most easily stated, and verified. But its effects on the morals of the labouring classes, effects on which Lord Hardwicke

dwells, as he might be expected to do, are of course more important than any pecuniary gain, however great. We cannot resist the temptation of extracting from Mr. Adey's Report on Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire, and Hampshire, four of the most pauperized districts, the following statement as to the degree of moral improvement in those counties, and of the mode in which it has been effected.

"The improvement in the general condition "and habits of the labouring classes is, from its "nature, incapable of equal proofs with the pecu- "niary results; but if full and general employment "of all who are able to work, proved by the almost "complete cessation of applications for relief from "this class of paupers (isolated cases only appear- "ing during the last winter on the books of the se- "veral Unions), if indolence changed to activity, "rudeness to civility, if the concurrent testimony "of the different Boards of Guardians to this "alteration is a proof of improvement in the la- "bourer, if the knowledge that the great bulk of "the labouring class have been regularly em- "ployed throughout the winter, and in their own "neighbourhood, is a proof that it was the system "that created this kind of pauperism, then I hesi- "tate not to assert, that the alteration of the "system has effected immense good; for these are "unquestionable facts throughout the district "under my superintendence, &c.

"The labourer, aroused in an effectual manner

" from his former state of torpid dependence, in a " degree inconceivable to those who have not the " opportunity of watching the progress of the " change, has thrown off his idle habits, and be- " come steady, respectful, and industrious. The " exertion of the body seems to have brought with " it a corresponding exertion of the mind; while " the very effort that has thrown off bodily inac- " tivity, appears to have called into being, or " roused to action, a principle of moral control, " which had so long lain dormant, as hardly to be " known to exist. The knots of idle and boon " companions at the beer-shop, or the village- " green, have gradually lessened till wholly di- " vided. For thus aroused to work, it followed " that permanent employ became also desirable; " to obtain this, punctuality in their hours, dili- " gence in their labour, civility to their employers, " and regularity in their conduct was necessary; " these again work greatly in favour of moral im- " provement, while constant employment begets " good feeling between master and man."—*Ib.* 299.

We refer also to the address to Lord John Russell which appeared in the London papers on the 28th December by the Guardians of the Poor of the Cosford Union in Suffolk. This Union consists of twenty-eight parishes, and the Guardians state, that " throughout the spring of 1835, the evils " arising out of the old system of relief had grown " up to an alarming height. The incorporated " workhouse was then tenanted by many able-

" bodied paupers, who refused to do any kind of " work, and defied, by turbulent insubordination, " both the rules of the house and the power of " the magistrates." The paupers without, participated in this disposition, " and it was quite evident " there was a design to demolish the workhouse, " in order that thenceforward parochial relief " might entirely cease to be measured by the ne- " cessity of the poor, but be yielded to lawless " intimidation." In this state of things, the acting directors and guardians, as well as the magistrates of the hundred, applied to the Poor Law Comismissioners, and they inform us with what success, for they state, " That fifteen months have trans- " pired since the new measures came into opera- " tion, and that the workhouse is now conducted " with regularity and decorum. Profligacy, and " idleness, and insolence amongst the poor have " been replaced by sobriety, industry, and civility. " Not only the paupers themselves, but *the labourers* " *above that class*, and persons still further removed " from want, have become in a marked degree " more frugal and prudent—permanent employ- " ment has become general—and *the rate and sum* " *total of wages have greatly increased*—and though " the poor-rates have been diminished more than " 54 per cent. (from £19,223 per annum to £8,823), " *we have it in evidence that the general condition of* " *the labouring population is improved in their means* " *of subsistence and domestic comfort.*"

They substantiate these assertions by referring to the "increased demand for such articles of food "and clothing as are consumed by the poor"—by the introduction and increase of medical and benefit clubs—by the more punctual payment of cottage rents—and by "*the increasing number of small de-* "*positors into Savings' Banks.*"

A fitting comment on the motives of the opponents of the amended poor law, and of the passions which their allies in the public press address, is afforded by the further statement, "that almost "the only interests which suffer are those which "formerly profited at the expense of the moral "habits and domestic comforts of the poor—such "as those of brewers, publicans, keepers of beer- "shops, and some small tradesmen whose profits "depended mainly on the abuses of the old system."

We leave these facts and statements to speak for themselves. No railing of the interested, the prejudiced, the malicious, or the ignorant can upset them. They are the precursors of a moral and permanent regeneration, which shall re-unite the rich and poor, the high and low.

We now come to consideration of the measures which it is probable will be brought forward next Session. Of course we shall see the rejected measures of last year: the chief of these were—Bills

For the Reform of the IRISH MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS;

For the SETTLEMENT OF IRISH TITHES;

For the Reform of the Post Office; and

For the Abolition of Imprisonment for Debt.

These will pass rapidly through the Commons, for they will probably resemble, in all essentials, the bills of last year; and it is of importance that they should reach the Lords before Easter. Full time will thus be allowed for their Lordships' most mature deliberation, and the fate of the bills will be decided when the House of Commons is in full vigour of attendance, and before the annual money bills have passed; a time when addresses and remonstrances are of the greatest weight.

Amongst the new measures we may expect to find Bills

For the Settlement of the English Church Rates;

For the Establishment of an English Constabulary Force;

For the application of Poor Laws to Ireland;

For the Reform of the Law, more especially in Chancery; and

For various Church Reforms.

The question of English Church Rates presses for settlement. Half the parishes throughout the country are split by constantly recurring angry discussions respecting these rates. In several cases they are refused, in many they are rigorously cut down, in others they cannot be efficiently collected, and in some few the churchwardens

dare not attempt to call for them at all.* In some parishes the rates are applied solely to the repairs of the church, in others they furnish organs and organists, or improvements and decorations, and occasionally pay for churchwardens' dinners, and other lay recreations. These anomalies confessedly require reform: but the Dissenters go further, and desire to be relieved altogether from the penal burthen of church rates. They appeal to the fact, that the tithes and estates of the church were formerly responsible for the purposes to which these rates are now applied, and that the rates themselves constitute an unequal and variable tax, levied on a whole parish, at the discretion, and for the sole benefit of, at best, only a majority of the parishioners; that they are a virtual fine upon dissent, and so feed religious contention. They say, also, that as the Government approved itself a substantial supporter of the Church of England, in all its just rights, by placing the tithes upon a satisfactory and permanent footing; so it should also be equally just to the Dissenters, by redressing an innovation which time may have

* Within our own knowledge there is a parish in Essex, where, for the last 50 years, the successive Bishops and Archdeacons have (notwithstanding those laborious and important duties on which the Bishop of Exeter so boldly declaims) allowed the church to fall to ruin, and the service is now performed in a malting barn. The churchwardens say there is no hope of getting a rate, for the Dissenters are much more numerous than the Churchmen.

legalized but not sanctioned. This subject may cause some sharp debates, but the fact of Lord Stanley having transferred the payment of the rates of the Irish Church from the laity to the church fund, will afford a precedent which his Lordship will find it difficult to evade, and which, perhaps, his new friends, the Tories, may, out of compliment to him, adopt. At all events Ministers will undoubtedly satisfy the reasonable complaints of the Dissenters, and protect the Church by removing from it an irritating cause of offence.

Indeed, unless the Liberals do step forth and protect the Church from its *professing* friends, there is much fear that they will pull it about their ears. All see how they and their allies in the Lords are sapping tithes in Ireland; while, heated with strife, they are not behind hand in mischief at home. Oxford, their head-quarters, gave pain to every religious mind last year when it exhibited the persecuting and misquoting bigotry which was exercised against Dr. Hampden, and which a reverend principal of Brazen-nose College, has lately sought to revive. We have already given some specimens of the spirit which animates that Bishop, who, in his labour of love to conciliate the Catholics, calls, in his *Christian* charge, all those members of the House of Commons of that persuasion who vote on Church reform questions, "a perfidious "faction, who could not have acquired the powers "of mischief which unhappily they possess and

"exercise;" but by what in all gentleness and charity that thinketh no evil, this saint in lawn denounces "as treachery aggravated by perjury."* Archbishop Laud himself could not have laid claim to more high priestly authority, and might have hesitated to tell his Protestant clergy that they possessed the gift of pronouncing as "full and free "absolution from all their sins," to the people, "even as the Apostles."†

But this Bishop of the Duke of Wellington's creation is excelled in religious mischief by the Quarterly Review, the great mouth-piece of Sir Robert Peel and the conforming Tories. In an article on Church Rates in its last number, after ostentatiously pointing out the clergy as the great almoners and benefactors of all their parishioners, "however much some of them may have strayed from the fold," it proceeds under the supposition that Government intend to relieve these stray sheep from the payment of church rates, to advise them to "forbear" from all charitable, nay, "promiscuous intercourse," with the hope that "the Dissenters "would feel the change both in the amount the par- "sonage contributes, and in the example it sets." —p. 369. Having thus shut the parsonage door upon the Dissenters, it proceeds to open the workhouse gates for them. For, passing from the assumption that the great mass of *buyers* are of the Church of England, and of the retail

* Charge of the Bispop of Exeter, p. 13. † Ibid. p. 45.

dealers or *sellers* are Dissenters, it says,—"As "matters have stood in times past, Churchmen "have made no distinction in their dealings; they "have resorted to the shop of the Churchman and "Dissenter alike, only having respect to the ho- "nesty of the party and the quality of his mer- "chandize. Indeed so long as the Dissenter was "content with his condition in the State, which "was that of complete toleration, and did not seek "to disturb the Establishment, his scruples were "respected; which were the *rather supposed* to be "conscientious, because they subjected him to "some additional charge—a small one it is true, "but some additional charge—in supporting a "place of worship of his own; and a friendly feel- "ing was accordingly entertained towards him. "But once exempt him from church rates, and the "case will be altered. *The Churchman will then "naturally do his best to uphold the man who up- "holds the church;* it would be exceedingly un- "reasonable to suppose that he should do other- "wise—to do so would give just cause of complaint "to his own allies. We have no manner of doubt "the abolition of church rates would be a signal "of separation between the Churchman and Dis- "senter, complete as soon as present engagements "or connexions should cease to operate. Now we "submit that the Dissenter would not have cause "to rejoice in this result."—p. 371.

In other words, pay for my church and your own

too, and I will deal with you, more especially if I can drive a good bargain; if not—go starve. This is the sum and substance, to say nothing of the Christian spirit of the high church argument, which finally entrenching itself within the palisadoes of the Thirty-nine Articles, fulminates "the "sin of schism" right and left with the spirit of a Philpots or an Hildebrand, and winds up by designating the Church of England, "as the "single accredited agent through which all reli- "gious operations both at home and abroad were "to be conducted, so that the household was to be "visited, the congregation to be taught, the colony "to be quickened, the heathen to be converted, "*but still through her.*"—p. 372.

This is the spirit and these are the doctrines which are working amongst the bishops, the professors, and statesmen of our High Church party; and we leave it to the plain sense of considerate men to say, whether civil society, religion, and the state are likely to profit by the advocacy or rule of persons so heated and intolerant.

Judging from the tone of their speeches and their press, the Tories must be desperate, and reckless even of public opinion. Else wherefore would they have sanctioned one of their leading evening papers (Standard) putting forth on the 12th November, when there was much reason to fear a commercial and money market panic, the following notice, placed most conspicuously before its leading article.

" (From a City Correspondent.)

" I understand an Order in Council will be issued " this evening, to stop payments in gold at the " Bank."

Having thrown this fire-ball, there was added below as a salvo, " We do not believe it." Then why insert, and so very prominently, a report which if believed might have ruined thousands; and which, being false, could serve no purpose of news or instruction. But it seems the *conservative* watch-word now is, " Hurrah ! any thing for a row."

And in this spirit they are beating up for a popular clamour against the establishment of an effective civil force for the preservation of the property and peace of the country. For their dauntless organ, the *Standard*, on the very same day that it put forth the above feeler for a commercial panic, followed it up by calling on all classes,—but " more " especially the aristocracy and populace (remark- " able association !)—to unite in opposition to the " atrocious scheme of covering England with " centralized espionage and a prerogative gen- " dármerie." Proud of this bugbear, it proceeds to denounce " that fallacy, the omnipotence of " King, Lords, and Commons," which it is pleased to call " cant;" and then, in the following loyal tone, addressing the joint propensities of " a populace," and a disappointed and factious "aristocracy," it says:—" King, Lords, and Commons may, if " they determine to do so, establish a rural police,

" by act of Parliament. They have power to dis-
" arm the nation ; and if the starvation process
" appears too slow a mode of getting rid of them,
" to hang up the poor of the kingdom, and sell
" their bodies to the best bidders,—*de facto*, King,
" Lords, and Commons have this power,—*de jure*,
" they have not." Whereupon, the people are summoned to an obstinate *legal* resistance till this " tyranny be over-past." And what is all this premature rant about? Simply against the issuing of " a commission for inquiring as to the best " means of establishing an efficient Constabulary " Force in the several counties of England and " Wales." In other words, to substitute for the present decayed beadles and worn-out watchmen, an active body of efficient constables, who, being placed under proper control may serve to prevent crime, preserve peace, and, above all, protect the property of the lone farmer and peasant from robbery and incendiarism. It is against the organization of such a force that *Conservatives*, under the mask of liberalism, think they may with party profit declaim, while Swing and the Bristol rioters join chorus, and light bonfires.

We now come to the question of Irish Poor Laws. It is impossible to exaggerate the difficulties with which the relief of the poor of Ireland is beset. A selfish government, satisfied with removing, as far as their knowledge, and courage, and power went, the existing obstructions to the increase of wealth

in that country, would attempt no active measures either to promote the progress of improvement, or to remedy the existing distress of the mass of the people. They who shrunk from the difficulties of the English Poor Laws, would be appalled at the obstacles presented to their application to Ireland. They would leave all to time and chance, idly hoping that in three or four generations distress might gradually disappear. Such would, at the very best, be the conduct of the Tories. But such a conduct does not suit the temper of the times, nor does it suit a reforming ministry, whose maxim is, to allow no evil to continue which any exertion of theirs can terminate, or diminish. The present administration are pledged not to permit the existing generation of Irishmen to suffer and perish in the hope that their great-grandchildren may be better off. But, we repeat, the difficulties of applying a remedy cannot be exaggerated.

To transplant, at once, into Ireland the English Poor Law system, to give to every one of its eight millions an immediate right to comfortable support at the public expense, would be to abandon the whole country to pauperism. All the abuses which it took centuries to introduce into England would sprout up in Ireland within as many years—perhaps in as many months. And yet, short of this, what is to be done? This question we do not pretend to answer: but we know that the Government is prepared to answer it; and a short statement of their

conduct, with respect to the matter, will shew that they are likely to answer it well. About three years ago, it became evident that the question of Irish Poor Laws must be practically dealt with. Vain and vague schemes were proposed, and there was every reason to fear that some one of the many dangerous suggestions afloat would be forced on the legislature. According to their usual practice, (a practice which their opponents ridiculed, until experience forced even Tories to confess its wisdom,) the Whig Government issued a commission to collect information. At the head of it were placed the Protestant and Catholic Archbishops of Dublin, assisted by commissioners chosen from the best informed classes in England and Ireland. Two years were employed by the commission in collecting a body of evidence, as to the condition of the Irish people, such as never was before obtained, or conceived to be obtainable.

To this evidence was annexed a report containing many valuable suggestions, but proposing an extent of interference with the natural state of things which few persons think safe, or even practicable. It is well known, that ever since this report was presented, the Government have been anxiously and laboriously engaged in considering which of its proposals can be adopted to any, and what extent; and what measures are to be substituted for those schemes which are rejected. We believe that their deliberations are now nearly terminated. We

believe that a plan has been, in all its essential parts, matured, from which Ireland may derive the greatest amount of good, and be exposed to the least amount of danger, that is consistent with the essence of the experiment. Of this at least we are certain, that no administration not combining courage and caution, no administration of which the prevailing motive was not public spirit, and a real wish for the welfare of the country, and above all *no administration not possessing the confidence of the Irish people*, could be safely trusted with the planning of an Irish Poor law, or could successfully execute any plan which it had adopted.

The *glorious* uncertainty of THE LAW has long been the boast and the bread of lawyers,—weak and haughty minds believe mankind are best governed by exhibitions of force, and therefore uphold severity;* and the cunning and unjust will

* It is with heartfelt satisfaction that we hail a decrease in that stigma on our humanity, the number of our executions.

From 1820 to 1824, or during the Tory ascendancy, there were executed no less than 362 persons, being on an average . . .	90 per ann.
From 1824 to 1828, or during the Tory decline, the numbers fell to 229, or	50 per ann.
It continued at the same rate till their expulsion from office. But during an equal period of Whig rule, from 1832 to 1836, it has fallen to 155, or less than one-half, being only . . .	38 per ann.
Or if we take London and Middlesex, we shall find that the Tory government caused to be executed during 1827, 28, and 29 . . .	63 persons.

ever delight and find their profit or escape in cob-web intricacies. It belongs, therefore, to human nature that many should exclaim or sneer against cheap and well-defined laws, frequent and accessible courts, and a humane penal code. Their opposition is as unceasing as it is natural, and when aided by experience and technical knowledge, becomes extremely difficult to overcome. But the same Reformers who have surmounted prejudices and selfish interests in other institutions, will ultimately win for the people the cheap administration of clear and humane laws. In this endeavour they are aided by some of the highest and most enlightened legal authorities of the present day, who are proud to follow in the path of Romilly. During the next session, it is most probable, the state of our Criminal Law, the dispensation of Equity in the Court of Chancery, and the establishment of Local Courts, will, with other legal matters, be brought before Parliament.

The Church Reforms will probably provide for the improved discipline of the church,—the abolition of sinecures,—the proportioning emolument

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The Whigs in 1830, 1, and 2, only . . . 16
In 1833, but 2
1834 . . . . . none.
1835 . . . . . none.

And yet, notwithstanding, or may we not say in consequence of this merciful abstinence from blood, the number of offences in which violence has been used, has decreased?

to duty, and the prohibition of pluralities. Without entering into what may be the extent of these reforms, we beg to observe that no form of religion appears to have held or retained its hold on the conformity or affections of a people in the government or ministry, of which they themselves have not participated. The converse of this has been the great support of persecuted sects, when common danger and the pressure of opposing power have brought both high and low together. It is strongly exemplified in the rigid firmness with which the Presbyterian adheres to his creed and his *own* church; and amongst the Roman Catholics, where much of the effective ministry has always been in the hands of what are called the lower classes, and where mendicant monks and their fellow-orders have frequently aided or restrained Popes and Cardinals. But in the Church of England, since the day of its birth under the Robber Reformer, who declared himself its sole head, the Government has been absolute in all respects, and the ministry gradually removing from the hands of the people to the higher ranks, who now hold it almost exclusively, or absorb those who are introduced into it. Is it, therefore, that it has been less distinguished for its zeal and coherence than almost any other sect? We know not—neither do we know any authority in Scripture, in reason, or in worthy example for its absolute government and over-refined ministry, that shuts out the middle and lower orders of social life.

These observations are thrown out for those who are commencing the reform of our Church, and with a firm hope, that as they have recognised and acted on the wisdom and justice of popularizing the civil institutions of the country, so they will, in like manner, bring more home to the exercise and affections of the people, the government and discipline of their Church.

These appear to be the principal measures which will be submitted to Parliament next session, and which will follow in the train of the rejected bills of last year; but if the Lords should unhappily again reject all these, if they throw down the glove of defiance for a third time, then the King and the Commons, however reluctantly, must pick it up. We have already speculated upon the different modes of proceeding which may be adopted. No doubt Lord Melbourne and his colleagues have already deeply meditated upon the course they shall follow, and are now steadfastly watching time and circumstance for its application. We may have an earnest of their conduct from their speeches of last year. For on the 27th June, Lord Melbourne, during the debate in the Lords on the consideration of the Commons' Amendments to the Irish Municipal Corporation Bill, after ably pointing out the progressively increasing majorities of the Commons from seven to ten—to thirteen—to forty-five—and finally to eighty-six against the measures and opinions of the

Tory Lords, energetically continued,—"I ask you "to consider whether this is not owing to your "own imprudence,—whether it is not owing to "your own misconduct,—whether it is not owing "to your own blindness,—whether it is not owing "to the manner in which you seek to separate "yourselves from the whole body of the people,— "to the manner in which you have tried to do "every thing that is unpopular, and have abstained "from doing any thing that has in it the elements "of generosity and popularity?" And having pointed out to them the error of their course, he thus calls on them to desist. "My Lords, I implore "you not to be led away by the undisputed sway "you possess in this House, and *to mistake your* "*situation with the other House of Parliament.*"

And in the Commons, Lord John Russell, on the 30th June, during the debate on the Lord's rejection of the Irish Municipal Corporation Bill, said, "I do think, I do retain the hope—and I anxiously "cherish that hope—that the time may come, per- "haps within a few months, when the settlement of "this question may be effected, and when the pre- "valence of the reasons given by the House of "Lords for disagreeing to the present measure, "may yield to the general opinion of the House of "Commons and the people. I am sure if I did not "entertain that hope, I should despair of the further "maintenance of the British Constitution. I can "suppose no Constitution *more inconvenient* than

" one in which the House of Commons and the " people whom they represent being of one opinion, " the other House of Parliament shall determin- " edly, perseveringly, and unyieldingly maintain " the contrary opinion."

Lord Lansdowne, also, has given the weight of his important authority to these opinions, and Lord Holland, and the other ministers of the Crown have equally spoken out. Theirs have not been mere idle words, and therefore when the time comes, they will no doubt respectfully submit to his Majesty their plans and propositions for bringing the Lords so far into harmony with their fellow subjects, as to allow the machinery of an independent Government to go on. But should these be rejected, should they be denied all means of asserting the requisite dignity of a Ministry, and of passing bills demanded as well by the voice as for the peace of the country, then it will be their bounden duty to tender their resignation :—and who will undertake the Government ?

Let them resign, and leave the Tories, if they dare, to take the responsibility upon themselves of driving Ireland on to insurrection—to a repeal of the Union and the destruction of its Protestant Church. Let them shake if they will in their recklessness, the House of Lords to its foundations, and make the arbitrary experiment of ruling this free country by the novel means of a constant minority in the Commons.

These are the only terms upon which the Tories could take the government in the face of the present united liberal party. The strong nerves of the Duke of Wellington would shrink from the experiment; once or twice indeed he has already attempted to over-rule the House of Commons, and failed miserably; we do not think he will try it a third time. At all events, Sir Robert Peel is not the man to second, much less to lead on such an assault: he will not go to Rome this spring, and while here, neither the hunger nor the passionate prejudices of his party-coloured followers will thrust him into a ministry which could exist only by a series of *coups d'etat*. For by what constitutional means could he carry on the tithe-war in Ireland,* or the Church-rate blockade in England? Would

* Some may smile when they hear of a tithe war, but their incredulity will be staggered when they learn from a return to the House of Commons, which has been admirably commented on in the Examiner, that within less than six months—that is, from January to June, 1836—

nearly 400 declarations have been filed in the Courts of Law respecting tithes.

286 writs of rebellion issued from the Irish Court of Exchequer against some 4000 individuals.

1552 bills filed in the same Court, and in some cases against more than 200 persons in each bill.

In short, that above 15,000 persons have been brought into court concerning tithe questions, which it has pleased the House of Lords to keep open and festering for these last three years. If such be the unsettled state of tithe property now, what would it be under the Tories.

the House of Commons grant him additional supplies for twenty thousand more men, under Lord Kenyon and the Duke of Newcastle, to re-conquer Ireland? would he raise a loan? or would the Carlton Club find him in men and money? How would he ward off votes of censure and addresses to the throne? Would he dissolve his own Parliament and call another which might call him to an account? Sir Robert Peel is not the man for these vigorous freaks.—He knows too well his own advantageous position, and we give him credit for respecting too highly the constitutional authority of the country to embark in such an adventure. But would Lord Stanley? Alas, for the empty Dilly! But, Lord Lyndhurst, Lord Ashburton, and Lord Abinger, might not they form a government? No one may foretell the spiral course of these ambidexterous politicians; all that is known is, that they are shrewd persons, and that the first, after getting the Duke of Wellington into his Anti-House of Commons scrape in May, 1832, left him in the lurch.

But it is a mere waste of time to speculate on what any given set of Tories might do; for so long as the Reformers continue united, it is just as impossible for them to form a government as to make a minority out-vote a majority. The sustaining this majority is the corner-stone of the government, and this can be done only by keeping even with public opinion (neither *running in*

advance nor *lagging behind*), and by mutual forbearance and concession. But some of the more impatient of the Liberals and Radicals than whom more honest and independent members do not exist, have exclaimed, "This is mighty well, but the concession is all on our side;* why are we to sacrifice and postpone our ballot—our triennial parliaments, our extension of the suffrage, and our Peerage Reform, in favour of your Municipal Corporation Reform—your settlement of the Irish tithe and English Church-rate questions—and your Law and Church reforms." But the answer to this remonstrance is simply that on these latter questions of reform all are united, while on the former, many are divided; and, therefore, independent of other reasons, there is a sound expectation of carrying the one series, and no immediate prospect of forcing through the other. This may be deplored, but it cannot be denied, nor can it be denied that the best prospect of ultimately carrying the strong series consists in first establishing the milder. He therefore must be a very inconsistent and impracticable reformer, who would separate from his party and

* This is a mistake, for the Radicals forget there are other supporters of the government besides themselves, or they would see that there is just as much concession on the more moderate side as on the Liberal; the one by stretching, the other by restraining their opinions. It is between these two parties that the common object of supporting the present government produces an alliance, which is sustained by corresponding repression and concession.

thereby diminish their power of carrying those practicable reforms which he himself desires, merely because they will not divide their strength by striving also for other questions which he is obliged to confess, are utterly unattainable at present.

There is the danger also of out-running public opinion. Even last session, some of the measures proposed by government went quite as far as, if not beyond this opinion, as was shewn by the striking difference in the majorities on some of the more important questions. One step further and the absence or desertion of some of the more moderate party might have opened a gap for the entrance of the Tories, and then where would have been—not ballot and triennial parliaments, &c., but the Irish Municipal Corporations, and the Church-rates; the first of which the Tories would forthwith utterly destroy, and saddle the consolidated fund with the payment of the other. It is for an error such as this, and not for a forcible seizure of the government, that Sir Robert Peel and the more wise and wily of his party are waiting.

In 1827 the Whigs were situated with respect to Mr. Canning, much as the Radicals now are with Lord Melbourne, and a vast majority of them supported the government: and why? not because his measures fulfilled all their expectations, but because they saw as the Radicals now see, they were not able to form a government themselves, and that Mr. Canning's was the most liberal the state of public

opinion could then bear—and what was the consequence? Public opinion became more and more liberal till it enabled the Whigs to carry the Reform Bill.

But there are other Liberals who, in their honest impatience at the delays and obstructions, or mutilations and rejections, which so many of the liberal measures have met with in the Lords, exclaim, "These Whigs are powerless or insincere; we shall get on better with the Tories, for we shall be able to drive and bully them into good measures in the Commons, which they will cajole their allies in the Lords into passing." This is the very bait with which Sir Robert Peel fished for rats in 1834!—Again other ultra and more ambitious Liberals say, "Let the Tories come into office again; their presence there will soon produce a liberal reaction which will drive them from their places, and carry us on its waves over the heads of the Whigs into Downing Street, when and where we shall be able to carry all our organic reforms into execution."

These two suppositions are, to say the least, nearly akin to what is called reckoning without one's host. For let us ask, whence is to be drawn the force which shall wring more liberal measures from the Peel and Stanley government, than the present liberal Ministers not only propose, but carry? And where shall be agitated that stormy wave which shall whelm Peel and Stanley, and carry the Radicals into port. Mrs. Malaprop says, that in marriage it is

well to begin with a little aversion; but the world has not yet seen the joint success of political measures begun and founded on disunion. Undoubtedly, that which united the Liberals of all degrees in 1834 was the abrupt overthrow of the Government by the Crown, but it would be an utter distortion of reason to say, that the overthrow of a Liberal Government in 1837, by a section of the Liberals themselves, would produce a like effect. We know very well that we have just stated the difficulties, nay impossibilities, that would defeat the Tories, if they took the Government in defiance of the Liberals when united and carrying the country with them. But if a split took place amongst the Liberals, then the consequences would be very different, for it would alarm and disgust the country, and unless we are much deceived, the immediate result of such a manœuvre would be, that a large portion, (and powerful by their character, property, and constituencies), of Lord Melbourne's present supporters would, in utter hopelessness of acting with their late allies, go over to and support Sir Robert Peel and Lord Stanley. It is well known that even now there are several liberal members who, in their desire for union, and to uphold a liberal government, are in the habit of voting beyond rather than within their own individual opinions. Where would these members be on the first division? And where would those members be who dread a dissolution? Certainly

not on the side of the Radicals, whose practical illustration of the "Stavo bene, per star meglio, sto qui" epitaph, would, inevitably, give Peel and Stanley a sufficient majority in the present House of Commons to carry on the government. And during the four or five remaining years of this Parliament's life, where would be the latent force to coerce the Tory ministers, or the spirits from the vasty deep to whelm them? And what would be the state of unhappy Ireland, when they who should, and who could have saved her, shall be split and quarrelling for theories amongst themselves?

As to speculating on the temper of the constituencies when the dissolution should at last come, we need only reply that five years in the present times is an eternity. Five, or much fewer years would enable the Tories to renew all their old official connections now interrupted or dissolved, and would furnish them with fresh and active recruits. We should see all the strongholds of power replenished with a vigorous relief of Tory judges, Tory bishops, Tory lord-lieutenants, magistrates, governors, and subordinates, all re-marshalled far and wide. There is not an old Tory of any principle who would not make it a point of honour to die and make room for some able-bodied Tory successor during this Conservative millenium: and the mischief would not end here. Sir Robert Peel would then have an opportunity "of fighting that

battle of the constitution," which he unveiled to the hopes of Anti-reformers at the Goldsmith's Hall dinner on his former accession to power, for he would have that majority, for the achievement of which, Blackwood, his great organ, says, no later than November, "*No sacrifices of money or time, no expenditure of vigour or talent, can be deemed too great.*" But what would this *expensive* majority, and these *puppets* of the Radicals do? Repeal the Reform Act? No, no; such is not Sir Robert's method of going to work; but gradually and plausibly a different current and spirit would be infused into all the measures of government, and five years of Conservative harmony between the Lords and Commons would go far to introduce so many undermining clauses, so many side-wind instructions to revising barristers, and to open so many sluices of corruption and intimidation, that when the dissolution did come, the Tories might find their amended and explained Reform Act *no such bad thing after all.* And then the Liberals would have their work to do all over again, and with the stigma of a first failure.

But we have no fear of such a suicidal and Tory outbreak on the part of the Radicals. They know full well their own strength and their weakness. They know that by their concurrence with the present Government many useful reforms are originated or liberalized, and that they themselves are gradually winning their way with the country, and accustoming its ear to the discussions of

subjects from which it would formerly have turned deafly or indignantly away. We know no more upright gentlemen, or more useful members of Parliament, than Mr. Warburton, Mr. Grote, Mr. Hume, Mr. Bannerman, Sir William Molesworth, and many other equally honourable members who act with them. They represent a large, honest, and independent section of public opinion, and have, therefore, most deservedly great weight with a liberal government; but it would be a gross impeachment of their sober judgment, and they would so consider it, were they to be accused of meditating the construction of a ministry amongst themselves. None know better than they that the country is not ripe for such a move; none know better than they that both in a selfish and a patriotic view, their post is at the right hand of the present Government, where they may be sponsors for its liberality, or the avengers of its timidity. This is their present duty, and their constituents expect it from them.

Mr. O'Connell clearly understands this position. He frankly declares, that his views go beyond those of the Government; but he as frankly confesses, that he sees no immediate means of carrying them into effect; and therefore he adopts and gives his most strenuous support to that administration which assures the largest prospect of *attainable* reform. His late resolutions, carried at the General Reform Association in Dublin, after recording

the necessity for carrying not only the Tithe and Municipal Corporation Reform Bills, but ultimately, and at large, the application of the principles on which they rest, go on to declare,—
" That the present Administration enjoys the full
" confidence of the people of Ireland, and that we
" know no language sufficiently strong to express
" our admiration of, and gratitude for, the just,
" firm, manly, and impartial government of Lord
" Mulgrave."

" That, under these circumstances, we deem it the
" sacred duty of the representatives of the Irish
" people in Parliament, to give their zealous sup-
" port to his Majesty's Ministers upon all occasions
" that do not involve, if any such should be, a
" direct violation of political principles."

This leads to the subject of OPEN QUESTIONS, which has lately been so ably advocated by Mr. Henry Bulwer. There are many precedents. Parliamentary Reform was an open question between Mr. Fox and Mr. Burke, under Lord Rockingham's administration, as it was subsequently under Mr. Pitt's, between himself and Mr. Dundas. We all remember Catholic Emancipation; and the Corn Laws are now an open question. It is desirable, no doubt, that every latitude, compatible with the consistent march of an administration, should be allowed to its members; but, on the other hand, it is equally clear, that some limit must be fixed. No active avowal of fundamental principles, which contradict

those of the Government, or differences upon questions strictly executive, can safely be permitted. In fact, all open questions, *quo ad hoc*, weaken an administration, which is necessarily supposed to be unanimous. So, if the Ballot now were made an open question—and we do not say that it ought not to be so—yet, if different members of the Cabinet took opposite sides, the moral force of the Government would be weakened. But, on the other hand, this mischief might be more than counterbalanced by the increased strength and cordiality gained to the Government by widening the circle within which its members might be chosen, and by the additional weight which each individual opinion would then carry from its unquestionable sincerity. Practically, it is a choice of evils; and if in this, or other cases, it be found, that the inconveniences or dangers exceed the advantages, great as they specially may appear, then there can be no true Reformer, who, in the present state of affairs, ought not readily to postpone the open discussion of his own cherished measure, *in favour of the general security of all reforms.* A rigid obstinacy might expose him to suspicion, for it could not carry his own, and might overthrow all other liberal measures. And, after all, that march of Reform, which leaves the smallest practicable distance between the hindmost and the foremost ranks, though not the most rapid, will last longest and go furthest.

Thus, then, we have no doubt, that when the session opens, it will be found, that mutual concessions have been made; and the more impatient of the Liberals, reconsidering the peculiar difficulties which surround the present Government, and recoiling from the applauses of the Tories, will be found at their post, actively defending the common cause of Reform. They should well know that their opponents are not to be beaten by fits and starts, but it is by patient co-operation and forbearance, that step by step, measure by measure, and office by office, in short, by time, the great Reformer, that the Liberals must gradually and so best reduce the great Tory ascendancy, which a domination of sixty years has so deeply rooted in their own and their followers opinions, that a Liberal ministry seems to them a robbery or an usurpation. No wonder, then, that they rave and rant. But they may call church and state in danger till they are hoarse,—they may encourage insurrection amongst the poor, and a run upon the Bank in one and the same day of panic,—they may hire renegade forging priests to preach up religious bitterness,—they may instruct the Times to tell Oxford that the Dissenters have no religion, and the Quarterly Review to threaten them with no customers—they may leer on the Lyndhurst side of their face, to the Orangemen, and, on the Peel side, put on conformity smiles,—they may hurrah Sir James Graham and Mr. Recorder Shaw in their Joanna

Southcottisms,—but all will fail, so long as the Reformers stand fast together and forbear. Lord Lyndhurst, the ablest, the wiliest, and the best performer of the party, tried his destructive plan last year and failed. He strove, to the very utmost, by his *alien* speeches, and kicking out exploits, by sarcasm in word and deed, to provoke Ministers from the even tenor of their way. But Lord Melbourne was not so easily caught. He firmly and temperately rebuked the man *duri frontis et perditæ audaciæ*, who led on a tribe of silly Lords to the edge of a dangerous precipice; but he allowed no threats of his opponents, or complaints of his friends, to draw him from his defensive position. He well knows, that they who in civil struggles strike first or too soon, seldom strike last.

And now, before concluding, let us run over some of the more prominent acts of the Liberals and the Tories during the last ten or twenty years. They afford a far safer mode of judging than plausible professions.

In 1817, the Tories suspended the Habeas Corpus Act.	The Liberals, under Sir S. Romilly, advocated the mitigation of the penal code.
In 1817, the Tories passed their six celebrated gagging bills.	
In 1820, the Tories persecuted the unfortunate Queen Caroline.	The Whigs rescued her.

In 1821, they opposed all reductions, more especially of the supernumerary Lords of the Admiralty.

In 1821, Lord Mulgrave (then Lord Normanby) carried these reductions.

In 1827, Sir Robert Peel, the Duke of Wellington, and the Tories, broke with Mr. Canning on the grounds of his favouring Catholic emancipation.

In 1829, the Liberals forced or enabled the same Sir Robert Peel, Duke of Wellington, and Tories, to admit and carry the Catholic emancipation.

In 1828, the Duke of Wellington, and Sir Robert Peel, and Tories, being in power, opposed to the last the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts.

In 1829, Lord John Russell and the Liberals carried this repeal in despite of the Ministry.

In 1829, the same government and party refused to transfer the right of returning a Member of Parliament from the convicted rotten borough of East Retford to Leeds or Birmingham.

In 1830, the Duke of Wellington declared the old rotten borough system the perfection of human wisdom.

In 1831 and 1832, the Liberals being in power disfranchised all the rotten boroughs, and raised the constituency of the three kingdoms to nearly a million.

In 1832, the Duke of Wellington and the Tory Peers protested against it as revolutionary, and subversive of our institutions, &c.

In 1832, they carried the REFORM BILL.

The Tories always upheld it.

In 1833, they ABOLISHED SLAVERY.

They opened the trade of India and of China.

The Tories, during their whole tenure of office, did nothing,

They amended the POOR LAWS, by which above three

leaving their abuses untouched and their burdens increasing in amount.

The Tories defended, and fought for them to the very last vote in the Lords.

The Tories opposed all Church Reform.

The Tories called it a mutilation of *the Word of God, out of office, and adopted it when in.*

The Tories kicked out both bills.

The Tories revelled from 1792 to 1814, in all the glories and profits of war, imposing incalculable millions of taxes, and increasing the national debt by the *feather weight* of £573,228,595, whereby they have burthened the country with another *feather weight* payment of 21 *millions* per annum.

After the peace, they retained in the public offices no less than 27,365 persons, at an annual expense of £3,763,300!!

millions sterling have already been saved.

They REFORMED THE CORRUPT CORPORATIONS OF SCOTLAND AND OF ENGLAND.

They reformed the Irish Church by increasing the smaller livings, and reducing 24 bishops to 12.

They passed an act for promoting general education in Ireland.

1836, they passed the English Tithe Act,

And would have settled the Irish tithe question, And have reformed the corrupt Irish corporations.

In 6 years they have taken off above 8 millions of taxes, abolished immediately or in prospective all the old Tory sinecures, or places of non-effective work, reduced public expenditure from a gross £54,223,414 to £48.787,538, effecting thereby a saving of FIVE MILLIONS AND A HALF on 20 millions, for the remainder is made up of interest for debt or dead weight.

In 1835, the Whigs, beginning by a reduction of their own salaries, had reduced this army of officials by 3797 persons, at a saving to the public of £967,000 per annum.

In 1822, still incorrigible they employed 6788 persons, at salaries amounting to £726,572, to collect the revenue, being at the rate of £10 15*s.* 2*d.* per cent.

In 1835, the Whigs had reduced this Tory excess by 1979 persons, at a saving of £167,928 a year, collecting the revenue at the rate of only £5 17*s.* 3*d.*, being little more than one-half of the Tory charge.

These are the principal deeds of the two parties. Verily, by their fruits you shall know them. But, hear their opinions—

"The House of Lords was the true representative of the people," gravely stated Lord Wharncliffe, at Halifax, himself an ex-cabinet minister. "Away with the aliens, away with them!" shouts in spirit Lord Lyndhurst, an ex-Lord Chancellor, from his seat in the House of Lords, against the whole Irish nation. "Extend the pure faith amongst the infidel faction of perjured idolaters," ejaculates in the same tone the meek Bishop of Exeter, a Tory pillar of the Church. "Put your trust in God, and keep your powder dry," respond the smouldering Orangemen of Ireland. "All Reformers are knaves, vagabonds, or atheists," says the Tory Lord Lieutenant of Norfolk, at a public meeting in his county. "Public meetings are a farce," escapes from the Duke of Wellington, in his place in the Lords. "The Reform Bill is subversive of our institutions," solemnly protests the same ex-Minister. "I must resign rather than consent to the appropriation clause," murmured Sir R. Peel, to his disconsolate whippers-in, having equally *opposed*, and having been more than equally *converted*, on the Currency question, the repeal of the Test Acts, and Catholic

tent Conservatives, and these are the men, and this the party, to form a popular government, reconcile Ireland, and promote Reform ! ! !

And now, people of England, men of Ireland and of Scotland, remember these deeds, and, reflecting on these things, say, which will you have? which do you prefer? Shall your affairs be conducted by statesmen who have given an onward march to our country, in the straightforward line of its old free institutions,—who, notwithstanding the clamours of their opponents, have taken off eight millions of taxes, and denounced all sinecures, and ineffective offices, and have raised the trade and commerce of the country above 30 per cent. in six years,—will you have men who extinguished that last legacy of the Tories—incendiary fires, and an insurrectionary peasantry in England, and who have maintained Ireland in tranquillity by equal government, and *by the expectation* of equal laws and institutions—who have kept us at peace, though the Tories declared, six years ago, that nothing short of a miracle could stave off a general war for six months. Say, shall these men, the old and constant friends of civil and religious liberty, the tried and experienced Reformers, perfect and work out the reforms they have begun, or shall a remnant of Tory-radicals, with hot impatience, overthrow all stable liberal government, in favour of an ultra-liberal scheme of commencing upon a fresh series of reforms, before the first is

completed and established? Or will you trust in the constant opponents, either open or concealed, of all reforms whatever, whether in finance, church, law, state, colonies, or trade; and who, when reforms are carried, adopt or *conform* to them, with the avowed object of thereby gaining strength enough to weaken or pervert them?

If you will have these men, instruct your representatives to join chorus in the hypocritical or fanatic cry of "Church and State in danger,"—"Spoliation,"—"Revolution,"—"Independence of the Lords,"—or any other hubble-bubble bye-word they may pick up. But if, on the other hand, you think *reforms can be best conducted by Reformers*, instruct your representatives to be firm and united,—to carry and make good what they can carry, and to bide their time for the rest. Warn them, in their pursuit of, perhaps, useful theories, not to imitate the unwise dog in the fable, who lost the substance in snatching at the shadow; and, above all, keep your eyes on those high-flying Patriots, who, in the excess of their love of Reform, are seeking to promote Reform by upsetting a Reform Government in order to make room for those most approved reformers—the Tories!

THE END.

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